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INDIAN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT.

REPLY TO ATTACKS BY CAPTAIN PRATT UPON THE
INTRODUCTION OF CIVIL SERVICE
REFORM METHODS.

WASHINGTON, January 29.

CAPT. R. H. PRATT, the army officer who for some years has been detailed as Superintendent of the Government Indian School at Carlisle, Pa., publishes a monthly paper called the *Red Man*, ostensibly for the purpose of supplying information of interest to the white friends of the Indian. This would not be a subject of complaint if the information he supplied were truth, or if the inferences he drew from his pretended facts were honest. The little paper, however, has degenerated into a mere vehicle for Capt. Pratt's personal fault-finding. One article in the last number calls for notice. It is entitled "The Uncivility of Civil Service Reform," and it begins with the statement that—

Civil Service (*sic*) in the Indian school service, in March next, will have had five years to demonstrate its worth. During that time Civil Service in the Indian service has been absolutely under the imperious control of two persons—Gen. T. J. Morgan, late Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who inaugurated it, and Dr. W. N. Hailmann, for more than three years past Superintendent of Indian Schools, who has elaborated and enforced it.

The article then goes on to show how hollow have been the virtuous pretensions of Dr. Hailmann, by taking the statistics of the school officers and employees in 1892,—nearly a year before

Commissioner Morgan went out—comparing them with a corresponding roster made up in 1895, and indicating the number of changes which have occurred under an administration outwardly committed to Civil Service reform. He shows, for instance, that of 103 Superintendents in 1893, only 32 remained in 1895; of 368 teachers receiving salaries of \$600 a year and upward, only 116; and of 83 matrons receiving like salaries, only 19. “All the people in these three positions,” is his closing fling, “were all this time under the protection of this so-called Civil Service.”

Here is the spoilsman's old familiar argument, based either on ignorance of the law or on wilful misstatement of it, that the Civil Service law pretends to “protect” anybody. If Capt. Pratt would take the trouble to read the law against which he rails, he would discover that only the way *into* the public service is guarded, but that the heads of departments are left as free as ever to discharge any one who does not do his work well, or who makes himself personally offensive, and that dismissals for partisan reasons are the only ones subject to investigation and punishment. Neither is there any bar put upon voluntary resignation, and Capt. Pratt has not taken pains to inquire how many resignations, transfers, and promotions are included in the changes made.

Until last spring the Civil Service rules were not extended to cover any of the persons in the Indian school service except the classes just mentioned and the physicians. Capt. Pratt's figures concerning what he would call the “unprotected” classes of employees are cunningly put forth, and in a manner calculated to deceive readers who are not accustomed to dealing with Civil Service matters. He exultantly declares that “a greater showing of the want of protection and utter violation of the promises made by the Civil Service may be found” by comparing the general lists of employees at any school in 1892 with the list at the same school in 1895; and he cites four illustrations, all of them extreme cases and widely separated. At the Albuquerque school, he says, of 61 employees listed in 1892—in classified and in spoils places both, of course—only 4 remained in 1895; at Chilocco, of 51, only 4 remained; at Genoa, of 42, only 3; and at Salem, of 40, only 1. And all this record is charged, as

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a cause of offense, against Dr. W. N. Hailmann, the present efficient and excellent Superintendent of Indian Schools.

Now let us compare Capt. Pratt's statements with the facts. In the first place, Dr. Hailmann did not take office till January 1, 1894. With anything prior to that date he had absolutely nothing to do. In 1894 there were on the list of school employees 89 superintendents. Of these, 63 remained on the list of superintendents in 1895, 2 had been transferred to the position of principal teacher with promotion, 5 had resigned voluntarily, and 19, or nearly 22 per cent., had been relieved for cause. In 1896 there remained 51 of the original number in 1894; 1 had died, 1 had been transferred to the position of principal teacher, 4 had resigned, and 6 had been relieved for cause. In 1895 there were on the list of superintendents 86 names. Of these there remained in 1896 71 names; 6, or nearly 7 per cent., had been relieved, 4 had resigned voluntarily, 4 had been transferred to the position of principal teacher, and 1 had died.

In 1894 there were in the matrons' service 90 persons receiving a yearly salary of \$600 or more. Of these, in 1895, 62 remained in the service, 5 had been transferred to the position of teacher, 2 had been transferred to the position of assistant matron, 10 had resigned voluntarily, and 11—or 12 per cent. of the entire number—had been relieved. In 1895 there were 85 matrons receiving \$600 or more a year. Of these, in 1896, 57 remained in the matrons' service under the same name; 2 having married, remarried under different names and 1 as field matron; 5 had been transferred to teachers' positions, 10 had resigned voluntarily, and 10—or 12 per cent. of the whole number—had been relieved for cause.

According to the Indian Office report of 1894, there were at Albuquerque 21 employees receiving \$500 or more a year; of these, in 1895, 8 still remained in the service at Albuquerque, 8 had been promoted or transferred for climatic reasons, 2 had resigned, and 3 had been relieved. In 1895, there were at this school 21 employees of the same class; of these, 15 remained in the school in 1896, 5 had been promoted or transferred for climatic reasons, and 1 had resigned.

In the report for 1894 Chilocco is credited with 26 employees of this class; of these, in 1895, there remained at the school 12,

5 had been promoted, 2 had been transferred, 4 had resigned, and 3 had been relieved. In 1895 there were 30, of whom 24 remained at the close of 1896, while 1 had been promoted, 4 transferred, and 1 relieved.

In the report for 1894, Genoa is credited with 22 employees of the \$500 class; only 8 remained, it is true, at the close of 1895; but only one of the changes was a dismissal. Of the rest, 6 had been transferred and 3 promoted; 2 had resigned, and 2 positions had been discontinued. In 1895 there were 18 of this class; 10 of them remained at the close of 1896, 3 having been transferred and 1 promoted, 3 having resigned and 1 having been relieved.

In the report for 1894, Salem is credited with 18 employees of the \$500 class. Of these, at the end of 1895, 8 remained; 2 had been promoted and 1 transferred, 3 had resigned, and 3 had been relieved. In 1895, this school was credited with 18 of the same class; in 1896, 7 remained; 1 had been promoted and 3 transferred, 2 had resigned, 4 had been relieved, and 1 position had been discontinued.

So much for the schools mentioned by name in Capt. Pratt's article. But how is it with some of the larger schools of the same class which he omits with the insinuation that they are no better situated? Fort Shaw, in 1894, had 19 employees of the \$500 class. At the end of 1895, 10 remained, 5 had resigned, 2 had been promoted, and 2 relieved. In 1895, there were 20, of whom 17 remained at the close of 1896, 3 having resigned. In 1894, Phoenix had 16; 12 remained through 1895, 1 having been transferred, and 3 having resigned. In 1895, there were 12, of whom 11 remained through 1896, 1 having been transferred. In 1894, Santa Fé had 11 employees receiving \$480 or more a year; 5 remained through 1895, 1 had been promoted, 2 transferred, and 3 had resigned. In 1895, there were 18 of the \$480 class, of whom 10 remained through 1896, 3 positions having been discontinued, and 3 employees transferred, and 2 employees having resigned. In 1894, Haskell had 34 employees of the \$500 class, of whom 27 remained through 1895, 1 position having been discontinued, while 3 employees had been promoted, 2 had resigned, and 1 had been relieved. In 1895, there were 38, of whom 29 remained through 1896, 2 positions

having been discontinued, while 2 employees had been transferred, 3 had resigned, and 2 had been relieved.

Every "resignation" here mentioned was a voluntary resignation. All the persons whose resignations were requested have been classed in these statistics as "relieved." The reason for choosing the higher classes of employees for comparison is that these filled the more important places in the schools, and were therefore more directly under the supervision of Dr. Hailmann in his capacity as an educator. The servants and lesser employees have under all administrations, until the larger part of them were brought under the Civil Service rules by the President's orders of last year, been the prey of the spoilsmen and patronage mongers. Every one who knows Dr. Hailmann can answer for it that, had he been empowered by law with the regulation of the entire school service, he would have done all that could be done to make the tenure of every class of employees permanent during useful service and good behavior. Nobody knows this better than Capt. Pratt.

In the one illustration which the Captain draws from his own experience to prove the evils of the merit system in the Civil Service, he asserts that—

Within a few days he has been informed by the Office of Indian Affairs that the Civil Service (*i. e.*, the Superintendent of Indian Schools) will select and send to him such petty employees as one assistant seamstress and two assistant laundresses; these to replace employees who have been months in the service of the school, and who have been endorsed to the Indian Office as proving satisfactory, but who have not passed the curriculum of the Civil Service examinations.

Another artful trick of words. The whole cause of Capt. Pratt's disgruntlement in this case is that, after he had employed certain persons of his own choosing in the positions named, he was reminded by the Indian Office that emergency appointees of this sort could be carried on the rolls, under the Civil Service rules, only ninety days in any one year, and that he would have to fill their places with eligibles from the registers of the Civil Service Commission. Other schools are subject to precisely the same rule, yet from none of them come these doleful complaints. On the contrary, the general testimony of the most successful

schoolmen in the service is that the average efficiency of employees appointed under the competitive merit system so far exceeds that of the persons appointed under the old feudal plan as to render comparisons absurd. Pratt's preference as to the manner of choosing employees is shown in the bid he makes for favor after the 4th of March. After describing the way Republican administrations have turned out Democratic employees to make places for Republicans, and Democratic administrations have turned out Republican employees to make places for Democrats, he adds:

Now, in carrying out the expressed will of the people it seems to us equally necessary and proper that the Republicans should have the aid of officials and employees who are in sympathy with the plans of the party, and not be forced to use those who were selected and put in place to carry out a reverse policy.

No, it is not "Tom" Platt who speaks, or "Dick" Croker, or "Abe" Gruber; it is Capt. Pratt, a spared monument of the mercy of an administration whose motives he has persistently assailed with misrepresentation.

F. E. L.



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